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Exposed Body and the Spectacle of Virtuality

In the meantime, there are five billion human bodies. Soon, there will be eight billion. Not to say anything of the other bodies. Humanity is becoming *tangible*, and also tangible in its inhumanity. What is the space opened between eight billion bodies? What is the space in which they touch or draw apart, without any of them or their totality being resorbed into a pure and nil sign of itself? Sixteen billion eyes, eighty billion fingers: to see what, to touch what?¹

Boardwatch magazine's Jack Richard estimates that 50,000 people now engage daily in cybersex using up to 700 real-time chat lines (Kane 1994: 21). The main problem they face is not being able to type quickly enough, especially with one hand.²

¹ Jean-Luc Nancy, "Corpus," in *The Birth to Presence*, trans. Claudette Sartiliot (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), pp. 196–197.

² *Cultures of Internet: Virtual Spaces, Real Histories, Living Bodies*, ed. Rob Shields (London: Sage, 1996), pp. 116–117; the reference in the quotation is to Pamela Kane, *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Electronic Highway* (New York: MIS Press, 1994).

Two quotations, two spaces, so incomparable. Both open territories of the body's attempt to take itself beyond itself; both describe the situation of unfulfilment. But do we speak of anxiety in any of these cases, the anxiety brought over by the process of alienation? Doesn't it rather seem that the incompatibility of the fields opened by the above quotations indicate that thinking in such terms is precisely what is escaping from the horizon of thought today? What happened and whence the incomparability? What follows is an attempt to trace the division that separates these two experiences, the division that constitutes our contemporary experience of the body, its space, weight, resistance or its lack...

Glancing backwards historically, one can clearly see how the philosophical problem of the body (which, if one looks closer, always turns out to be the problem of the body of the philosopher) has become displaced in our contemporary world.

The body of the Platonic cave was never really a problem, because it had always been recognised as a cadaver, living death in the power of obscure forces of Mother Earth, whose most secret and at the same time most visible sign was corruption – secretive mystery of the telluric belly. For the philosopher, his body was precisely what was left behind at the moment of the philosopher's birth as the philosopher. Yet coming to life in such a way meant being born of the dead matter (telluric origination) and the discharge of this not-so-pure a spirit from the gestating belly of the mother cave-belly constituted a potent metaphor of this ambivalent transubstantiation.

Philosophic technology of modernity turned the body into the animal-machine. In the world given to rationalistic thinking the body is still dead, as a mechanism is dead. This kind of death, however, no longer implicates any threat coming from beyond the body (as in the case of telluric and therefore "magical" powers). Rational training is supposed to make the body the perfect tool of reason and science begins to empower such a tool with extensions of which the telescope and the microscope can be seen as the most paradigmatic. But there is irony waiting at the end of this road pursued by modernity, whose project is to discipline the rational body and make its functioning strict:

the servant of reason “magically” disappears on the way to its mastering – modern physics does not operate in the world analogous to the body of senses, most of the molecular processes can be described only mathematically, that is, by purely formal language of categories of the mind. Hence the famous question asked by some analytic philosophers about the relationship between the table (or the body) of our everyday experience and the table (or the body) of modern physics. But is it really an analytic question? Doesn’t it smack of some “tellurism”? Shouldn’t it be asked rather differently?

What happens to the body and its telluric threat when it disappears from the terrain of modern science? It takes the place of religion as art. A very interesting metamorphosis comes to pass here: science binds itself to the earth rationalising its resources and leaving all “magic” and transcendence beyond the pale, but it can only do it by relegating the body – in which, as we have noticed, both earth and transcendence are inseparably bound together – to the realm of artistic activity which towards the end of the 18th century begins to take the place of religious experience. What is exorcised from the realm of scientific truth is basically “the life of the senses,” as far as it goes beyond schematisation and rationalisation of mathematics. But, paradoxically, it was not the truth of science that provided the model of the life worth living for the European educated classes of the 19th century – although technology changed the circumstances of life substantially, it was art that provided the codes of behaviour and values from the Romantics until at least this belated monument of the *belle époque*, Proust’s *Remembrance of the Things Past*. It is the aesthetic experience that accommodates transcendence throughout this epoch, but although it is often discussed in religious terms, the aesthetic experience is the experience of “the life of the senses” and therefore of the body in transcendence.³

³ In a text devoted to the role of the body in music (to be published soon) I write:

[T]he communicative site of music is neither the body-object nor “hidden” behind it, it displays itself across the dimensions of the signifying body. While a body sign always says: “My true infinite self is behind the sign you see,

However, as the body, step by step, reaches its obsolescence in science, the discourse of art slowly continues in the same direction: art as science becomes more and more desensitised.⁴ What takes centre stage in artistic practices of late 19th and early 20th centuries is experimentation in a close to scientific sense: to perform exhaustively what it is possible to do with given materials. In order to do that, one cannot avoid rationalising one's artistic discourses. Probably the best illustration here is Schönberg's twelve tone system and its mathematical structures (or Milton Babbitt's music in the second half of the 20th century), but one can also name a lot of other examples of major artists and practices fitting the bill, e.g.: Marcel Duchamp as the father of conceptual art or severing the link between the word and the world by Mallarmé. Thus science and art led by the same urge to uncover the immutable laws of the universe as its disembodied truth become "autonomous," that is, desensitised, which results in their being accessible only to the narrow group of specialists who know their autonomous codes that are completely alien to the "ordinary people," because such codes have nothing to do with their life, since the world for them is the world of senses, of praxis as sensual engagement with all that comes their way. Becoming science, art lost the position it held in the 19th century of actually influencing the life of Western societies, since it became incomprehensible and inaccessible even to those who wanted to participate, but could not cope with the new codes (specialisation demands lots

I am deep down inside here and the surface that is the sign is only an allegory that I adopt from the resources of a code," the transcending body has no depth, it hides no secrets, it is the obvious itself, yet, at the same time, it is the essence of the unexpected. It is always on the outside with others, communicating. As long as there is the body in music, even the abstracted concert hall system is liable to surrender to it [...] – a good singer or instrumentalist is able to bring his or her own body to the audience's ears while performing. In one sense the 19th-century religion of music was right (although, paradoxically, a materialist dialectician as Adorno would scorn at such dictum): in the concert hall, transcendence would sometimes have taken place, yet it was not the Infinite that visited the wretched flock, the visitor was the experience of sharing which made one burst with oneself.

⁴ Arnold Gehlen, *Man in the Age of Technology*, trans. Patricia Lipscomb (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 20–40.

of time).⁵ That is how what is nowadays called popular culture has taken over (its close affinity with certain type of Romantic art notwithstanding⁶) and how the desensitised body has come back with vengeance: on the pop market the overload of chaotic sensual information makes the telluric body oscillate in the mediatic space making no sense of the body of senses and this way losing the body again.

Yet the desensitisation of science is not just the desensitisation of the number as the abstraction of the world of senses. The world of modern physics, the world beyond senses, does not obey the rules of the world of senses, as it is proved by e.g. quantum mechanics. It is the world which cannot be completely calculated, as Heisenberg's law of indetermination demonstrates (the more accurately the speed of a particle is measured, the less accurate the measurement of its position, etc.). Quantum mechanics does not allow to anticipate the result of one particular measurement, instead it applies statistical laws, which provide the class of possible results and estimate the probability of each of them. The result is omnipresent accidentality and unpredictability.⁷ In high velocity processes it is useless to try to measure the precise amount of energy spent, so the law of conservation of energy does not hold. Light as possessing two natures at once (wave and particle) puts into question the law of identity of formal logic. The particles like mesons turn into one another or even appear out of the vacuum, which begs the old onto-theological question of distinction between nothing and something.⁸

That which was inaccessible to human senses and impossible to predict has always been defined as strictly speaking inhuman: the

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ See: Herman Broch, "Einige Bemerkungen zum Problem des Kitsches," in *Kommentierte Werkausgabe in 13 Bänden*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975, 1977), Vol. 9.

⁷ Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time* (New York: Bantam Books, 1988), Chapter 4.

⁸ Stefan Breuer, *Die Gesellschaft des Verschwindens* (Hamburg: Junius, 1992), pp. 166–172.

Sacred. Moreover, it has always had another characteristics connected to the ones already mentioned: it was impossible to tame and always threatened, its attack was always unexpected. The more one tried to make use of it, the more sneaky it became. This corresponds perfectly to what happens in our technological world today: the more we try to tame it, by means of the religion of science, the bigger the number of unexpected, unplanned threats, the greater possible catastrophe looms in front of us. The anxiety we feel is not really rational, it is rather our irrational reaction to the dangers of unspecified category, which it is impossible to place anywhere in particular, because many aspects of our technological world are strictly speaking unimaginable to a non-specialist in a given field, lacking any reference to the world of senses, as is the case with e.g. radioactivity or the destruction of ozone layer, not to mention the global market (also the technological product, this time of information technology).⁹ The Sacred is an impenetrable power impossible to be manhandled and all attempts to do it result in the escalation of catastrophe and multiplication of dangers. Is not such situation – remember the ancient tragedies? – our own in the face of nuclear energy, climatic changes or genetics (not to mention the world economy again)? But nowadays the Sacred, paradoxically, spreads by means of rationalisation and objectification, taking advantage of the laws of reason. As a caustic remark by Stefan Breuer has it, in the particle accelerator the reality beyond senses is present in pure form as God in the cathedral. Wouldn't the philosophers of the Enlightenment be flabbergasted to find out that the science they practised against religious obscurantism will provide the tools of *parousia* or the appearance of the Sacred on earth?¹⁰ Doesn't it look again as the return of the telluric repressed?

As one can see, from a certain perspective science largely succeeded where religion had failed and from many quarters one can

⁹ Hartmut Böhme, "Über die Unvorstellbarkeit der Gegenwart und den Verbleib des Menschen," in *Verzeinigungen*, ed. Hermann Sturm (Essen: Klartext, 1989), pp. 123–141.

¹⁰ Breuer, *Die Gesellschaft...*, p. 170.

hear that technology (together with economy in the form of free world trade) will succeed where politics has failed, namely, in creating the communicative space open to everybody, silencing the voices of none and allowing for the maximum of personal freedom and self-realisation. This, of course, is the laudatory view on one of the most important grandchildren of quantum mechanics (and military industry), that is, the Internet, the matrix or cyberspace.¹¹ Surprisingly, or perhaps not so surprisingly, one has to come back to the thematics of evacuation of the body here.

What is this trans-humanity in the mediatic or communicative sense? It seems to be the product of a certain promise of technology that promises spiritual transcendence of the body, time and space, which is at bottom a religious or, to be more precise, onto-theological promise (cf. Plato's cave). The result of entering the matrix is supposed to be instantaneous empowerment and mastery over the above trinity (body-space-time): one can adopt and accommodate any identity one fancies at a given moment in the milieu in which space as distance, and with it the time necessary to cover it, cease to get in the way. Such self-enhancement has been elatedly described as transgression of the natural limits of humanity, trans-human in the sense of beyond-the-human as well as across-the-human, since the matrix is said to allow greater contact with others ("contacts with others are enriching") and greater knowledge of oneself (it allows adoption and trying out of many *personae*). Communication is said to be better than ever and in a sense it is, but one has to be more precise as to what communication means in such circumstances. The answer could be: the exchange of messages and images. But understanding it in such a way makes it fetishised communication, that is, the accomplished incarnation, in the social-mediatic reality, of what Heidegger, speaking about technological approach to the "natural world," called *Ge-stell*.¹²

¹¹ Certain distinctions have been drawn between these three terms, but they are of no consequence to this text.

¹² "Enframing" and the presence of the frame-screen in our context is definitely not accidental.

Enframing (*Ge-stell*) means the gathering together of that setting-upon which sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve (*Bestand*). Enframing means that way of revealing which holds sway in the essence of modern technology and which is itself nothing technological.¹³

A very similar enframing as the “mobilisation of resources”¹⁴ takes place in the matrix: everybody and everything in the Internet is my resource and I present myself there as the resource for others, as an abstracted image on somebody’s screen, with whom one may or may not engage without any risk or consequences. That means no real surprise or resistance: there are no “accidents” in the matrix, everything there is intentional, so all resistances are only pseudo-resistances, that is, pre-programmed ones as in a computer game where my activities and the programme’s resistance to them are guided by the pre-established pattern always in control and therefore predictable.

Such “liberated” experience of sociality undoubtedly strongly influences the way people act, think about themselves, their life, etc. It induces a very popular contemporary mind-frame: on the one hand, the feeling of isolation from my immediate surroundings (both in social and geographical senses), because it is easier to relate myself to others in the matrix, which delivers me from all the “messy” consequences of the real-life engagement that I cannot control, while at the same time (and as a consequence of the above) I feel unhappy and diminished in the space I live in, all of which results in the atomised society of anxious monads; on the other hand, dreams of power and narcissistic grandiose self set loose to become anything in the matrix, to perform any atrocity or heroic deed within the bounds of the virtual world. Here, anxiety and narcissism are the two sides of the same coin: the more everyday social space is

¹³ Martin Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology,” in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1977), p. 20.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

compartmentalised and inaccessible, the stronger the need to let oneself loose in the matrix, which leads to the more severe shrinking of the social and the ever bigger need to compensate for that in the virtual space – the vicious circle closes upon itself.¹⁵ Therefore, one should ask whether technology should constitute the model for politics. Should the trans-human be thought along technological lines?

The answer here would be the emphatic no, because what is at stake in the politics of the mobilisation of resources is just bare mastery. What one comes across in it is the reversed Master-Slave relationship, not even dialectics, of Hegel. In the analyses of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* what makes the Master is his willingness to risk his life in order to prevail. But in the matrix it is precisely the ability to escape all risks that makes the Master: one can always withdraw and avoid the “real-life” consequences of one’s activities, especially if the other is unable to behave the same way, because its access to cyberspace is limited or none. The most obvious example here could be the relationship between speculative-territorial-virtual capital and the industrial production tied to its “material basis;” the former can take flight at any moment (e.g. stock-market panic) and leave the ruined national economy to lick its wounds.¹⁶

Taking the above into consideration, one can say that nothing ever takes place in the matrix, because there has to be a place in order for something to take place and a place can be opened only in one way, by what Heidegger called *Dasein*, yet not exactly in the sense of “being-there,” as it is usually translated, but, more precisely, “being-the-there,” the disclosure of *Dasein* and Being,

¹⁵ Obviously, the matters are much more complicated than that, because atomisation is not only, or even not primarily, self-inflicted, as it has been suggested above. There are political and, above all, economic forces that cause it, but there is no place here for such analysis.

¹⁶ Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalisation: the Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), Chapter 1.

being an “each time” of this disclosure, in such a way that no disclosure would take place (no Being) if the one “disclosed” did not disclose itself with regard to an other “disclosed.” Disclosure itself consists only in the coincidence of disclosures. To-be-there is not to disclose a place to Being as Other: it is to disclose/be disclosed to/through the plurality of singular disclosures.¹⁷

The disclosure here is not of Being as the Other of everybody’s singularity, but as the taking place and disclosure of singularity as an “each time” of time and place-space which can be accomplished only in *bodily* disclosure, as a surfacing of resistant and disclosing bodily mass or weight. It is the body that opens space and time in its praxis of energy spending.

There is no place in the matrix, because what is done within the limits of a code is not a praxis: the code is always encoded, pre-coded, sup-posed. As it has already been said, the code offers only pseudo-resistance, the resistance that has been prepared in advance. The code is a perfect realisation of mastery, because it is perfectly controllable and predictable, it offers no contingencies and therefore no risks. But this is precisely its point of failure: without contingency it offers no real *differences*. In order to provide them, it would have to transgress its own rules and this is precisely what it cannot do without destroying itself. Although cyberspace is in many ways an “excessive” phenomenon in which body-time-space seem to be transcended, this is only a facile excess of images. The point is that in the matrix, body-time-space become reduced to their own simulations, that is, representations the infinite multiplication of which causes the feeling of pseudo-excess that one can, in different ways, come across in the analyses of both Kant and Baudrillard: the great speed and multiplication of images break down the boundaries of the subject, yet the effect is far from liberatory – all this results in inertia-fascination that freezes one in monadic limbo of the infinitely multiplied sameness. Excess means noting if it does not start in the disclosure of the body, its exposure, and such body has no

¹⁷ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, trans. Robert D. Richardson and Anne E. O’Byrne (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 82.

image because it always reaches beyond itself, as it is constituted as co-appearance, a coincidence of multiplied disclosures that open the world, the originary differentiality of time and space. One does not have a body, one is a body in the fullest possible sense of this word, the *imageless body*, the body – my body – but the body as given to me without becoming a thing I own, without being reappropriated through the representation that other bodies are for me¹⁸, undifferentiated weight, mass; the body with no representation superimposed on it, no the mechanistic body of reason, but the body without organs, if organs are functional parts of the whole.¹⁹ Such body is the explosive deployment of energies that create and expose differences (emphatic plural) as originary, since an origin is the continual disclosure of being singular, an “each time” taking place and originating time and space.

An origin is not an origin for itself; nor is it an origin in order to retain itself in itself (that would be the origin of nothing); nor is it an origin in order to hover over some derivative succession in which its being as origin would be lost. An origin is something other than a starting point; it is both a principle and an appearing; as such, it repeats itself at each moment of what it originates. It is “continual creation.”²⁰

Because there is no difference “in general,” as difference is not the “juxta-position of in-differences”²¹ and, being an “each time,” the disclosure that opens and exposes the world is never one, in order for body-time-space to be, there has to be me *more than one origin*. To be, that is, to be the world, that is, to be in the world and therefore in time and space is to be many, to be divided.

Without this excessive origin without a starting point, that is, without bodies that originate time and space, there is no symbolic

¹⁸ Nancy, “*Corpus...*,” p. 199.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 203. “Body without organs” is of course Antonin Artaud’s image (cf. 84, November 1947, p. 102).

²⁰ Nancy, *Being Singular Plural...*, pp. 82–83.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 82.

logic (no notions of before, after, above, below, etc.) and therefore no signs. In this sense, *there is no cyberspace beyond the body*.

What happens in the matrix is simulation, that is, reduction of the body to a sign that can be subject to exchange. Such exchange of signs is commonly called communication, but in fact we are speaking here about a certain kind of sign fetishism. As in capitalist society a commodity becomes an alienated fetish from which its nature as the product and incarnation of social relations is effaced within the market economy, so the sign, although it originates in the body, becomes perceived as detached from it, even more, facilitating the escape from the body (in a pseudo-transcendence). But such a sign is an impotent one, since the exchange of signs constitutes no praxis, actually, it tends to withhold it and induce the vertigo of fascination for the "silent majorities." Communication as the exchange of fetishised signs always turns out to be the ultimate narcissism without the subject. This is what our contemporary politics has turned into – a sterile discourse without substance which wants to substantiate itself by means of projecting ever new formal, inconsequential differences in order to keep up the exchange that it is.

The sign does not only originate in the body, as the sign is differential, as it can be a sign only because there are other signs among which it takes its differential place (a solitary sign would destroy itself as sign), it is also a sign of the exposure of bodies to each other. The body is always among other bodies as an origin of difference of time and space. Of time: I never meet Tom, Dick, and Harry "in general," but each time a different "incarnation" of each of them, in a different "mood," in a different "state"²² and the same can be said about myself. Of space: space is not only perceived differently by different people, it is itself differential as senses share themselves – our experience of space is the experience of our senses which cannot be "translated" into each other, they partially overlap, but they also get in the way of each other and therefore the experience of the senses is not the experience of

²² Ibidem, p. 8.

a whole, a sum of the senses but of the sharing of senses: togetherness and separation at the same time.²³ What is more, some senses share themselves within themselves: I do not only see space, I also hear it, smell it, touch it²⁴... but I see it with two eyes and hear it with two ears of which each sees or hears differently (if only because it occupies a different place). All of this makes the experience and orientation of space possible.

The bodies as plural origins are originally with one another. As an “each time” of an origin they are equal to themselves and equal to one another, that is, they have nothing in common with one another, yet this “nothing in common” is what they have in common. What I have in common with another wo/man is the fact of *not* being the same wo/man as her/him.²⁵ In such a way bodies are exposed to each other as they always co-appear being with one another – being-one can only be understood by starting from being-with-one-another.²⁶ Exposed bodies do not exchange because the traffic of signs in their relation-communication is displaced (yet not completely arrested), since what the body exposes in its opening of space and time is its and the other’s finitude which are equal without being the same. I cannot recognise myself in the death of others, their deaths do not create a homogenous *we* as: “we the mortal beings,” because death is not common to us all (your death is not mine, I cannot even imagine it along the same lines), and although my finitude is nothing (I cannot make a representation of it), yet it appears, but its appearance (which is not an image) demands *relation* as its possibility: I experience my finitude in the finitude of the other which is not my finitude (I am able to create an image of the dead other). So, to be more precise, as we have already said, finitude *co-appears*, since *the appearance of death is impossible without the*

²³ Jean-Luc Nancy, “Sharing Voices,” in *Transforming the Hermeneutic Context*, ed. Gayle L. Ormiston and Alan D. Schrift (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

²⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 396.

²⁵ Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*..., p. 155.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 56.

other.²⁷ The image “gets in the way” here, it exposes, but it is not subject to exchange, at least not in the fetishised sense that has been described above. Such “get-in-the-way” exposure destroys meaning, that is, the subject of exchange, and exposes the fact that the bodies originally un-exchange²⁸ (expose each other), providing the possibility of recognition.

[D]eath speaks in me. My speech is a warning that at this very moment death is loose in the world, that it has suddenly appeared between me, as I speak, and the being I address: it is there between us at the distance that separates us, but this distance is also what prevents us from being separated, because it contains the condition for all understanding.²⁹

The first signs at the dawn of humanity retained in themselves something of this telluric (!) “knowledge:” the frescos of Lascaux were hidden, they were supposed to remain out of sight, they were not subject to exchange, but the seat where exposure pierced and disclosed the fabric of the everyday life of signs.³⁰ They were images but the images of their own destruction, of exposure and disclosure in which the unworking of death was incessantly hollowing their place.

It is often said that the exchange of signs, as the exchange of commodities, provides us with the blessing of mutual enrichment. But of course, as it is the case with the exchange of commodities, it is far from being the case: such economy of signs enriches the West, adding ever new signs to its omnivorous and eclectic repertory, while all the others get ever poorer, dispossessed of their signs in the process of their commodification, colonised with Western

²⁷ Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, ed. P. Connor, trans. P. Connor et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 28.

²⁸ Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*..., p. 90.

²⁹ Maurice Blanchot, “Literature and the Right to Death,” in *The Work of Fire*, trans. Charlotte Mandel (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 323–324.

³⁰ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*..., pp. 254–255.

images they are not able to digest. There are also “three worlds” as far as symbolic power is concerned: fetishised, commodified signs can be stored in large quantities and the one who is able to do it heightens his power of mastery over representations, which is also the power of mastery over others. The eclectic power of “diversity” can also be overwhelming and confusing for the other due to speed and multiplicity of images.³¹ But the source of diversity is not oscillating speed but the opening of time and space by the body as the only source of singularity and therefore difference; only coming together of multiple origins as bodies can establish what can properly be called diversity. However, this would mean that diversity does not enrich anybody, because it always *escapes* us, as it is “nothing,” it eludes identification, it is irretrievable as a sign.³² Therefore, diversity is precisely what resists the spectacle of signs – the “spectacle of diversity,” as the matrix is often described, is properly speaking contradiction in terms.

Of diversity, in a non-fetishised meaning of that term, no representation can be made, but this does not mean that diversity is something “beyond this world,” as a regulative idea that cannot be realised only infinitely approached without any hope of incarnation. Although diversity *is not a work*, rather the unworking, yet it *works* and is always put to work as co-existence in time and space of the exposed bodies that co-appear and engage with each other in praxis, the un-exchange of explosive energies that the bodies are, between themselves and the world. This putting to work of difference is the only process that enables anything new to come into the world, something unexpected, something of consequence, but, at the same time, also *having consequences*, consequences measured by bodies in joy and suffering, and mindful of that. Only in such incarnated community, community without the image, and therefore a non-communitarian one, diversity can appear as incarnated praxis, it

³¹ In return to onto-theology again: television, as Baudrillard analyses it, and, of course, the Internet, as the machines of *parousia*. Marinetti in the *Futurist Manifesto* says: “Time and space have died. We live in the absolute because we have created the eternal, omnipresent speed.”

³² Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*..., p. 151.

cannot do so in a pseudo-community of disembodied masters on the loose in the matrix able to transform themselves at will and slaves reduced to their bodies alone experiencing this exclusion as punishment, because being punished by the consequences (e.g. economic) of free play of the forces the masters have unleashed and, as they are able to metamorphose within split second, hold in control. Not the community of the machines of *parousia* but the community that takes place and takes time, always takes time.